

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A system for retrieving or updating system status for a computer, the system comprising:

- a first computer;
- a microcontroller capable of providing a retrieve or update system status signal to the first computer;
- a remote interface connected to the microcontroller; and
- a second computer connected to the first computer via the remote interface and communicating a retrieve or update system status command to the microcontroller.

2. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the remote interface includes an external port for connection to the second computer.

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3. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the second computer is at the same location as the first computer.

4. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the second computer is at a location remote to the first computer.

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5. The system defined in Claim 4, additionally comprising a pair of modems, wherein a first modem connects to the first computer and a second modem connects to the second computer.

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6. The system defined in Claim 5, wherein each modem further connects to the public switched telephone network.

7. The system defined in Claim 5, wherein each modem further connects to a cable network.

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8. The system defined in Claim 5, wherein each modem facilitates connection to a satellite.

5 9. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the remote interface includes a remote interface microcontroller that connects via a bus to the microcontroller.

10 10. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the remote interface is responsive to a command sent from the second computer to retrieve or update system status from the microcontroller.

11. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the first computer generates status information.

15 12. The system defined in Claim 11, wherein the second computer displays the status information.

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13. The system defined in Claim 1, wherein the remote interface includes a power source independent of a power source for the first computer.

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